

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877



SPEAKING OUT — Pastors and religious leaders addressed racial disparity March 27 during the 2015 Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) Leadership Summit in Nashville, including (left to right) Russell Moore, ERLC president; Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in Nashville; Fred Luter Jr., pastor of Franklin Avenue Church in New Orleans; and K. Marshall Williams, senior pastor of Nazarene (Baptist) Church in Philadelphia, Pa., and president of the SBC's National African American Fellowship. (BP photo)

SBC leaders say...

Convention must build on race relation progress

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) progress in racial reconciliation will fall short of what is needed if

it is measured by the one-time election of an African-American president, speakers said at a leadership summit.

A panel of Southern Baptist leaders commented on the status of race relations in the convention during a March 27 discussion at The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation, a two-day meeting sponsored by the Southern Baptist Ethics and

see SBC on p. 6

LifeWay pulling heaven visitation materials

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — LifeWay Christian Resources has stopped selling all experiential testimonies about heaven following consideration of a 2014 Southern Baptist Convention resolution on the sufficiency of Scripture regarding the afterlife.

LifeWay told Baptist Press about its decision to halt sales of heaven visitation resources March 24 in response to an inquiry about Don Piper's book, "90 Minutes in Heaven," which is being made into a movie slated for release this fall.

The book recounts Piper's supposed experience of heaven following a severe auto accident. The book has sold 6.5 million copies in 46 languages.

"Last summer, as we began developing LifeWay's

new structure and direction — what we've now identified as One LifeWay — the role of heaven visitation resources was included in our considerations. We decided these experiential testimonies about heaven would not be a part of our new direction, so we stopped re-ordering them for our stores last summer," LifeWay spokesman Marty King told Baptist Press in written comments.

"Now that we've begun implementing the new direction, the remaining heaven visitation items have been removed from our stores and website and will not be replenished. We have more work to do aligning the LifeWay Retail Division with LifeWay's vision and core values so we

covet your prayers as we continue to provide trustworthy Biblical Solutions for Life," King said.

Though LifeWay "was not mentioned in the SBC resolution affirming the sufficiency of biblical revelation and affirming the truth about heaven and hell," King told BP in an interview, "the resolution was approved overwhelmingly and was considered during our process."

The resolution, adopted by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June, warned Christians not to allow "the numerous books and movies purporting to explain or

see LIFEWAY on p. 8

SBC resolutions period opens soon

NASHVILLE (Special) — Everyone knows April 15 marks the deadline for filing income taxes, but it's also the opening day for resolutions to be submitted for the 2015 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention to be held June 16-17 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Oh.

According to Bylaw 20 of the Southern Baptist Convention's constitution (sbc.net/aboutus/legal/bylaws.asp):

■ Proposed resolutions may be submitted as early as April 15 but no later than 15 days prior to the SBC annual meeting, giving the Committee on Resolutions a two-week period in which to consider submissions. This year's cut-off date is June 1.

Resolutions may not be submitted during the annual meeting.

■ Proposed resolutions preferably should be submitted by e-mail through the resolutions submission page at sbc.net/resolutions/submit; or mailed to the Committee on Resolutions in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203.

Proposed resolutions must be typewritten, titled, dated, and include complete contact information for the person and his/her church.

■ Proposed resolutions must be accompanied by a

Resolutions Submittal form (downloadable from the resolutions submission web page) or by a letter on church letterhead, either of which must be signed by the pastor or other church officer from a church qualified to send a messenger to the SBC annual meeting certifying that the individual submitting the resolution is a member in good standing.

■ No person will be allowed to submit more than three resolutions per year.

■ The Committee on Resolutions submits to the Convention only those resolutions the committee recommends for adoption. Such resolutions may be based upon proposals received by the committee or may originate with the committee.

■ If a properly submitted resolution is not presented by the Committee on Resolutions to the messengers at the SBC annual meeting, a two-thirds vote is required to bring the proposed resolution to the convention floor for consideration.

Registration is now open for the 2015 SBC annual meeting at sbcannualmeeting.net/sbc15/ PreRegistration.asp.

All Southern Baptists can attend the annual meeting. However, only registered messengers have voting privileges.

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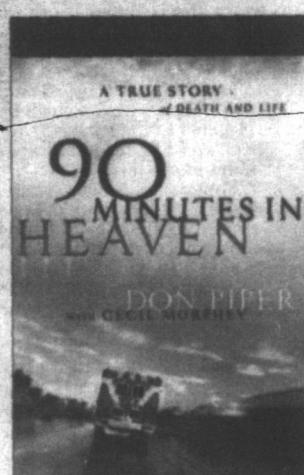
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a Christian

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APR 15 2015





From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

What is marriage?

On a warm, windswept Saturday, a young bride and groom were married in a Mississippi Baptist church. It was a scene undoubtedly repeated many times on that Saturday in many other venues around the state and country, but we seem to never grow tired of this age-old celebration of unfailing love and lifetime commitment.

Within minutes, the bride and groom were no longer two individuals but one entity in the eyes of God and headed into a lifetime of love and devotion. The challenges of marriage and the tragedies of life will have to be faced in the future, but for now all of that can be put aside for this brief, shining moment when God is on His throne and everything is right with the world.

The wedding ceremony is important to us, because it is symbolic of how seriously we yearn to take the concept of traditional marriage. That's the real reason we travel great distances and go to great expense to be a part of such weddings.

There are people in the America of today, however, who would degrade the God-ordained marital union of one man and one woman for life. There are those who would have us believe that marriage is not special or God-ordained at all, but rather a common "commitment" or "union" between people of whatever genders and sexual preferences suit them at the moment.

There are political, judicial, and cultural leaders in America who shamelessly excuse such sinful and immoral behavior and even boast of their efforts to normalize perverse relationships (Romans 1:32). Commentators have begun to observe that future generations of Americans will likely have a completely different concept of marriage than we do today.

In the world of tomorrow, marriage will mean anything anyone wants it to mean. Homosexual and lesbian marriage will have the same status as heterosexual marriage, but so will marriages between multiple partners, simultaneous marriages, group marriages, open marriages, and marriages between adults and legally-consenting young children.

There may even be legally-recognized marriages between humans and animals. (Don't laugh. Who

would have thought we would have gone as far as we have?)

This is merely one skirmish among many in the struggle with the secularists and elitists who would destroy foundational institutions like marriage and the way of life that goes with it, simply so they can live as they please.

Decades of indoctrination and intimidation seem to be paying off. A May 2014 poll by the reputable Gallup organization found 55% of respondents now support same sex marriage — a stark turnaround from a 1996 Gallup poll that found 68% of respondents opposed marriages between two men or two women.

The 2014 Gallup poll researchers reached these conclusions:

■ "For proponents of marriage equality, years of playing offense have finally paid off as this movement has reached a tipping point in recent years — both legally and in the court of public opinion."

■ "An important region on the radar of gay marriage advocates is the South, where a condensed cluster of bans on same sex marriage exists. All southern states have constitutional bans on same-sex marriage... The South (48%) is the only region where same sex marriage support falls below the 50% mark."

■ "Public opinion in southern states will be a barometer to observe, as the bulk of future legal battles will play out there in the months and years to come."

That last point would explain the recent multimedia onslaught across Mississippi by the Human Rights Campaign, designed to convince Mississippians of the humanity of same sex relationships.

Mississippi Baptists and Christians in general must get involved to have our voices heard on this matter. Otherwise, we will be relegated to the fringes as we have been on so many other important issues of our day.

First, let us get our own marriages in order. It is embarrassing and shameful that the divorce rate among believers is just as high as it is for non-believers. Only if we practice what we preach when it comes to marriage will people start to pay attention.

The struggle for the biblical concept of marriage is worth the effort. May we not fail at this crucial task.

Finally, sensible climate talk

The environment! Global warming! Why should Christians get involved with those kinds of debates? Don't we have more important or more interesting issues to consider? The Great Commission, for example?

I'm reminded of one of my sons who, when asked to clean his room, regularly responds, "Why?" Although I think he likes a clean room, perhaps he thinks that if he does nothing his mom will clean it for him. More than likely, he just doesn't think a clean room is worth the time and effort. My common response to him is that this is our home and he needs to take some responsibility for it.

I fear that many Christians, when asked about environmental issues, respond in a way similar to my son. We want a safe, clean, productive place to live but don't really care to take the time and effort to get involved. Scientists, politicians, and people with nothing better to do will take care of the details.

Indifference and apathy toward environmental issues, however, is an uncharacteristic position to take for those who follow Jesus Christ. After all, this is our Father's world, "the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it." The apostle John said of Jesus, "all things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" (John 1:3).

Moreover, in Colossians 1:16-17, the apostle Paul declares, "by Him [Jesus] all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

One could argue that God has it all under control and we, therefore, have nothing to worry about. The problem with this line of thinking is that God involved us with care of the world when He created us: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth'" (Genesis 1:26).

In short, we are stewards of this earth that God created, and those of us who have been redeemed by Christ Jesus have an obligation to represent the interests of the living God regarding serious issues that affect the earth and that impact human flourishing.



Guest opinion
with Jeffrey B. Riley

In many cases, who flourishes depends on flawed human beings making evaluations and implementing responses to issues. Examples of humans making flawed evaluations and implementing damaging responses to issues include:

■ A politically powerful group determines that overpopulation is a problem and enforces a one-child policy through forced abortion.

■ Air and water pollution are not deemed serious or cleanup is not judged economically feasible and the cases of cancer increase in a vulnerable population.

■ A scientist declares that humans are causing catastrophic global warming and majority world nations are forced to cut cheap energy sources. The poor are devastated.

These are the kinds of environmental problems Christians should be keen to understand and eager to answer with godly wisdom in light of theological, moral, and scientific truth. Christians should be the most eloquent and serious defenders of creation, compelled by the Great Commandment to love God and our neighbors.

On April 10-11, New Orleans Seminary's Greer-Heard Forum will host respected scholars who will dialogue on "Christians, the Environment, and Climate Change." This event is a special opportunity for our seminary family, area churches, and any interested persons to be informed on this controversial, politically important, and globally significant issue.

The truth about climate change matters to every one of us. Attend and weigh the evidence for yourself, or watch free live streaming of the event at GreerHeard.com.

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THE Baptist Record

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BAPTISTS

VOLUME 139 • NUMBER 15 • ISSN-0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

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How to explain last verses in Book of Mark?

NASHVILLE (BP) — While preparing to preach on Christ's resurrection from Mark 16, pastors will encounter a note in most modern Bible translations that goes something like this: "Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include verses 9-20."

That note should not confuse pastors or cause them to question the reliability of the Bible, five veteran preachers from across the U.S. told Baptist Press. The preachers advocated a variety of approaches to Mark 16, but agreed that the chapter affirms Christ's bodily resurrection regardless of where it ends.

"At the end of the day, the most important truth coming out of Mark 16 is the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, we should never teach Mark 16 in such a way that people grasp a longer or shorter ending but miss the Gospel," said Corey Abney, lead pastor of the Cincinnati-area Florence Church of Mt. Zion in Florence, Ky.

The controversy over Mark's last chapter centers on its ending. Some of the oldest manuscripts end after verse eight, with an angel announcing Jesus' resurrection to three women and the women feeling fear and astonishment.

Early church fathers like Clement of Alexandria and Origen did not mention verses nine through 20 when commenting on Mark 16, and the third- and fourth-century historian Eusebius said "the most accurate" copies and "almost all the copies" of Mark end at verse eight, Abney said, adding that the "style of Mark 16:9-20 is much different than the rest of the book."

On the other hand, most manuscripts contain verses nine through 20, including the Greek texts on which the King James Bible is based. The so-called "long ending" does not contradict other resurrection accounts, and the second-century church leader Ireneus appeared to quote the end of Mark 16 as authoritative Scripture.

What should pastors tell their congregations about Mark 16? Should they preach it as Scripture, or argue that it's not part of what Mark wrote? The five preachers surveyed by Baptist Press — all of whom affirm Scripture's inerrancy — explained their views:

■ **Corey Abney** believes verses nine through 20 were not part of Mark's original Gospel, and he recommends not preaching on those verses.



ABNEY

"On the one hand, I would not turn the pulpit into a seminary classroom and use half of my preaching time to explicate the reasons I accept the shorter ending. On the other hand, I would explain my reasons for ending my preaching and/or series at 16:8, followed by an exposition and application of 16:1-8."

"In my view, Mark's Gospel contains enough information about the resurrection that one does not have to supplement it with the other Gospels. If a pastor plans to discuss events and appearances after the resurrection, however, then clearly he must supplement his sermon with details from Matthew, Luke and John."

■ **Stephen Horn**, pastor of First Church in Lafayette, La., agreed that verses nine through 20 likely were not in the original text of Mark but citing biblical scholar Bruce Metzger, Horn said the long ending should probably still be received as New Testament Scripture.

"The so-called longer ending was widely known before the establishment of the canon [the authoritative collection of New Testament books]. This variant reading, even though lengthy, did not seem to trouble the early church."

Horn said he would "certainly" deliver a message from Mark 16:9-20 if he was preaching through Mark's Gospel, but he does not regard it as "the best text for Easter Sunday." Everything in the long ending, "when properly understood," is consistent with the rest of the New Testament, and preaching it can give church members confidence in the inerrancy of Scripture, he said.



HORN

MARK 16:8

"Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid."

[The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20]

"When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it."

"Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These two told what had happened to the rest; they did not believe them either, until Jesus appeared to the eleven who were eating; he rebuked them

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*"Mk 15:47; Jn 20:11-18
16:11 over 13;
14; Lk 24:11
Lk 24:13-32
16:14
dLk 24:30-43
16:15
Mt 28:18-20;
Ac 1:8
16:16 Jn 3:10,
18:30; Ac 10:31
16:17 45 in 4:48
*Mr 9:38.
Lk 10:17
Ac 5:16; 8:7,
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I have always loved the sound of a rooster crowing in the morning. Their lively sounds wake up the morning like nothing else. Now where I live roosters and chickens and farm animals are not allowed to be kept, but one short road away from our neighborhood are homes on five to ten acre lots where you can keep horses and donkeys and chickens and roosters if you want to. So within sound of us there is someone who has a rooster who welcomes the sun each day. It is a rare morning that I am out walking that I do not hear him. For several years I have listened to him and never saw him. In my mind I thought that he was super large and probably one of those beautiful multi-colored roosters with a big, red comb, but I had never seen him.

Recently, though, I just happened to be on his street when he was out strutting and waking folks up. I heard the cock-a-doodle-doo and I began to look up toward the house where it was coming from, but I didn't see anything at first and then I spotted out in a wooded area just to the side of the house a medium to small-medium sized rooster who was all white. I really was just shocked that he wasn't anything like I expected. So I walked over there toward where he was. He wasn't frightened and didn't run away but kept on pecking food and still, occasionally, singing his morning praises.

When I got close enough to him, I told him that I lived right near there and had for a long time enjoyed his morning serenade. He looked at me like I was a little bit off, but I just wanted him to know how much I appreciated him. Just to try to find out more about him, I asked him where he was from. He was polite but said, "I don't know. I was just hatched out one day and actually don't know who my mother or my dad were." I thought how sad. Then I asked where he went to school. "I never graduated from high school," he said, "but I

Directions

With Jim Futrel, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

A One Talent Rooster

did go back and get my GED." I said. "Well, that's great." He crowed again, pecked some more and I was about to run out of conversation with this guy anyway. Before I left I just wanted to affirm the guy and my appreciation of him and so I said, "I really do enjoy hearing you crow every morning, and I always enjoy it when your sounds pierce the early dawn's arrival." He looked at me strange again and said, "I'm just doing what I was created to do," and he pecked a couple of more times and cock-a-doodle-dooed and I realized he really didn't want to talk to me anymore so I walked on.

As I walked, his crowing became more faint as I was thinking about Jesus' parable of the talents in Matthew 25. He told about three servants who were called by the master and were given gifts from the master and then he left. One was given five talents, one two, and one was given only one. You remember the story, for time passed and later the master came back and called the servants to give an accounting of what they had done with what he had given them. "Oh," the five talent guy said, "I've got five additional talents." The two talent guy likewise had doubled, but the guy with one talent did nothing but go and

hide it and did not use his talent. The master was upset and angry because he had not done anything with what the master had given him. I thought about my rooster buddy who with little or no family support and not much education, just simply did what God had created him to do and day after day had been a blessing to my life. A one talent rooster had blessed me. There are some valuable lessons God's people could learn if they would just listen to that rooster.

One, when you do what you're created to do it will be a blessing. It really does not matter if you have one talent or five or ten or some people I've known who have every blessing and talent in the world it seems, but if you do what you were created to do, you will bless people's lives. I thought that probably the poor old rooster didn't have the sense to do what a lot of God's people do and that is instead of doing what they're created to do, they make a long list of all the things they cannot do. Apparently they think that that justifies them for not doing anything with the one or two gifts that the master has given them.

A second great truth is that if you do what God created you to do, you will bless people's lives

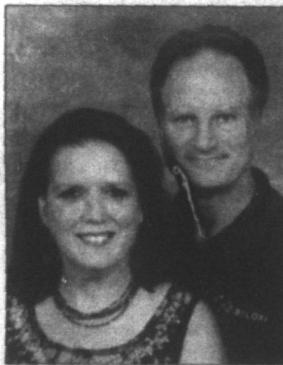
and you will not even know it. For years that little old rooster has been doing my heart good and I had never seen him, never met him, never talked to him, never thanked him, but he had announced the coming of the sunrise hundreds of times for me and he never knew what joy he always brought to my heart. Hardly a day goes by that somebody, maybe arm's length or miles away, doesn't do something that just absolutely makes my day or shapes my week and they don't even know it. Often, all they did was something that God had created them for and in so doing were such a blessing.

The third great truth is that if you do not do what you were created to do, a lot of people will miss the blessing and most of all you or I will not honor the One who has created us. In so many of our churches there are opportunities of service that are missed, not just by the person who doesn't respond but by everyone in the family of faith because someone assumes that their one talent doesn't make any difference. Wrong, wrong, wrong. There are children that would be blessed by your teaching and there are multitudes of people who would enjoy hearing your song. There are people around the world that would be blessed by your giving and people you do not even know whose life would be brightened by your smile. It is not that you have great talent, it is the fact that you would simply do what God created you to do.

So this week if you happen to hear a rooster, don't first and foremost think of Simon Peter's denials of Jesus, but rather think of my rooster friend who day after day blesses his entire part of the world because a one talent rooster is willing to do what he was created for. Then let's you and I go and do the same.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

Staff Changes



NEW HOPE CHURCH,
GULFPORT, has called Mike Racey as pastor. He is shown with his wife, Annette.



FIRST CHURCH, STATE LINE, has called Michael Stevenson as pastor. He is shown with his wife Savannah, son Charlie, and daughter Mia.

In other Staff Changes

George D. Berger has retired after 21 1/2 years as missions director for Lebanon Association

(now Pine Belt Association) in Hattiesburg. His retirement had been announced the previous October. Berger pastored for 30 years prior to coming to the association, including Calvary Church, Pascagoula; First

Church, Plaquemine, La.; First Church, Sumrall; First Church, Springfield; and Indian Hills Church, Greene County. The association honored George and his wife Jo Ann with a reception at 38th Ave. Church, Hattiesburg.

BIBLIOCRYPTER

OVDKRVX, QKDDKG CKH HBYH GBUJB

UL VRUD, OPH HBYH GBUJB UL WKXX.

BV HBYH XKVHB WKXX UL KQ WKX:

OPH BV HBYH XKVHB VRUD BYHB CKH

LVVC WKX.

HBUNX ZKBC VDVRVC

Clue: R = V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Jude 21

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

April 9, 2015

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

PLAN A CELEBRATION
DAY IN YOUR CHURCH



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

WE CAN DO MORE together

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM
SUNDAY

APRIL 12 IS
CP SUNDAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE STEWARDSHIP/CP
PROMOTION DEPARTMENT OF THE MBCB AT 800-748-1651,
EXT. 347, OR 601-292-3347.

MISSISSIPPI
BLACK
CHURCH

STEWARDSHIP
CONFERENCE
2015

July 16-18, 2015
Morrison Heights
Baptist Church
Clinton, MS

To register call:

Mission Strategy Dept., (800) 748.1651, Ext. 231
or (601) 292.3231

Registration:

\$50 after February 15, 2015
www.mbc.org/events

SUMMER CAMP 2015 GARAYWA

REGISTRATION FOR CAMP 2015 IS OPEN!
YOU MAY VISIT

WWW.GARAYWA.ORG TO REGISTER ONLINE
OR DOWNLOAD THE APPROPRIATE FORMS.

JUNE 8-12, JUNE 15-19, JUNE 22-26, JULY 6-10,
JULY 13-17, AND JULY 20-24
GIRL'S CAMP FOR GALS AND ALL GIRLS GRADES 3RD-6TH

JUNE 22-26 AND JULY 6-10
STUDENTS CAMP FOR AYTEENS AND ALL GIRLS GRADES 7TH-12TH

JUNE 29, JUNE 30, AND JULY 1
DAY CAMP FOR BOYS AND GIRLS GRADES 1ST-6TH

PLEASE CONTACT GARAYWA CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER
AT 601-924-7034 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.



Mississippi Margaret Lackey BAPTIST STATE MISSIONS OFFERING

GIVING GOAL: \$2 MILLION

Margaret Lackey grew up doing what most girls her age did. She played games, went to school, and did chores at home. She attended Hillman College in Clinton, where she studied to be a teacher, and later taught for many years.

Miss Lackey liked learning about missions. She taught young children in her church to love missions. She also enjoyed writing poems and mission study books. In 1912, Margaret Lackey was hired as the first paid leader of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

In 1903 a special day was chosen as the time to remember State Missions each year. On that day, women would learn about missions needs in Mississippi. Today, we call this special time during the month of September, the Season of Prayer for Mississippi Baptist State Missions.

Miss Lackey retired as corresponding secretary of Mississippi WMU in 1930. Five years later, the offering was named in her honor as the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering.

The Margaret Lackey Offering is the primary funding stream for key missional emphases to support efforts in many different areas: Camp Garaywa, Central Hills, Missions Volunteers, New Church Starts, Community Mission Projects, Disaster Relief, Criminal Justice, College Outreach, Christian Women's/Men's Job Corps, Cross-Cultural Evangelism, Language/Deaf Ministry, and Port Ministry. Margaret Lackey is like the Cooperative Program's little sister and adds value to what Mississippi Baptists are doing together in missions, Christian education, church leadership, and benevolence. The offering helps position us to fulfill the Great Commission appeal of Acts 1:8.

For more information on how to participate in Margaret Lackey, and for questions about resources contact the Mission Strategic WMU Departments of the MBCB at 800-748-1651.

PREACHING TOP CONFERENCE

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE • April 20
WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY • April 21
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE • April 22

FEATURED PRESENTERS: Daniel Caldwell, Ronald Meeks, Wayne VanHorn, Steve Stone

For registration and more information contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Dept. at 800-748-1651, Ext. 305, 601-292-3305,
E-mail: cwaylor@mccb.org

GROWING CHURCHES

Aug. 7-8, 2015

Harrisonburg Baptist Church, Tupelo
GC15: Training and Equipping Leaders for
Church Revitalization

Friday Night Featured Speaker:
Thom Rainer, President of LifeWay Christian Resources
Training Breakout Groups for Every Person in Leadership
Positions in Your Church

For more information please contact Marc Howard,
662-566-1700, Lee Baptist Association.

Sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry
Department of the MBCB along with Northeast
Baptist Associations. Contact the DFM at
800-748-1651, Ext. 283.

First Baptist Church of Grove City
3301 Orders Road
Grove City, Ohio 43123

ALL FOR YOU NATIONAL WMU ANNUAL MEETING June 14-15, 2015

Save the date for an amazing celebration of what God is doing around the world through missions! Come early to the SBC annual meeting in Columbus. First Baptist Church of Grove City is just a 10-to-15 minute drive from the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

For more information, contact Stephanie Pruitt, MS WMU at
601-292-3319 or spruitt@mccb.org

2015 Mississippi Baptist Handbell Festivals

April 24-25 First Baptist Church, Starkville
May 1-2 First Baptist Church, Wiggins

For more information contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 267.



Time at all locations: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

4/23 Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Ridgeland
4/28 Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Drive, Meridian
4/30 North Oxford Baptist Church, Oxford
5/4 Crosspoint Community Church, Hattiesburg
5/5 First Baptist Church, Brookhaven

For more information contact the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 800-748-1651, Ext. 284, or 601-292-3294



TOUR DATES:
JUNE 10-15, 2015

VARIOUS LOCATIONS
THROUGHOUT MISS.

VISIT US ON THE WEB
FOR MORE INFO:-

<http://www.mbcb.org/church-growth/church-music/mississippi-baptist-all-state-youth-choir-and-orchestra/>

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST ALL-STATE YOUTH CHOIR & ORCHESTRA TOUR

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2015 - 6:30 P.M.
Union Baptist Church, MS

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2015 - 6:30 P.M.
Wade Baptist Church, Moss Point

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2015
Hancock County Jail - 9:45 A.M.
New Height Baptist Church, Summit - 6:30 P.M.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2015
First Baptist Church, Greenwood - Noon
CrossPoint A Southern Baptist Church, Starkville - 6:00 P.M.
Concert at the Starkville Sportsplex

SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2015
Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus - 10:15 A.M.
Baldwin Baptist Church - 5:00 P.M.

MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2015 - 6:30 P.M.
First Baptist Church, Jackson, MS

Sponsored by the Church Music Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

CHURCH MISSIONS LEADERSHIP TRAINING



JULY 9, 2015 - SOUTHERN LOCATION
MAINSTREET BAPTIST CHURCH, HATTIESBURG
6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

AUGUST 7-8 - NORTHERN LOCATION
GROWING CHURCHES AT HARRISBURG BAPTIST CHURCH, TUPELO
MISSIONS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES OFFERED ON SATURDAY

AUGUST 21-22 - CENTRAL LOCATION
ANNUAL MISSIONS CELEBRATION AT GARAYWA, CLINTON
REGISTRATION STARTS AT 5:00 P.M. FRIDAY
ENDS AT 12:30 P.M. ON SATURDAY

NO COST
NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT TAMMY ANDERSON, MS WMU AT
601-292-3313 OR TAnderson@mbcb.org

2015 BIBLE DRILL



April 14 - Emmanuel BC, Grenada

April 16 - Temple BC, Hattiesburg

April 18 - Brandon BC, Brandon

April 21 - First BC, Meridian

April 23 - First BC, Starkville

For more information contact the Discipleship/Family Ministry Dept. of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 284, or 601-292-3284



HEARTSONG MUSIC & WORSHIP ARTS CAMP FOR 6TH - 12TH GRADERS WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY, HATTIESBURG, MS JUNE 23-27, 2015

ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE:
Bruce & Lisa Welkey
Flutists & Violinist
Nashville, TN

The students will learn, prepare and present the music/drama, OPEN UP THE HEAVENS BY Dennis and Nan Allen

Cost:

\$195 Per Person Staying in the Dorms
\$95 Per Person Commuting (includes meals, music, t-shirt)

For More Information contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB:

800-748-1651, Ext. 267
<http://www.mbcb.org/church-growth/church-music/schmied@mbcb.org>

Pray this day for...

"Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples." Psalm 105:1 (ESV)

Pray for: **Rebekah Clark**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through youth evangelism.

Pray for: **Cindy DeMars**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Guy DeMars**, missionary ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through hospitality coordination.

Pray for: **Thomas & Kerri Dewett**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Alvin & Mary Doyle**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through member care.

Pray for: **David & Pamela Carlton**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through theological education, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Richard & Wanda Clark**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Robert & Margaret Fortenberry**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through general evangelism, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Gloria Glaze**, missionaries ministering to Deaf Peoples through media promotion/consultation.

Pray for: **Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

Pray for: **Kenneth & Kimberly Hathcock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism, church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for: **Thomas & Bonnie Hearon**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Aaron & Tiffany Epps**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Sheila Flowers**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through administration.

The IM3 missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.

LIFE COMMITMENT SUNDAY APRIL 12, 2015

Life Commitment Sunday – a day to focus attention on the calling to vocational ministry.

For more information visit us at:
www.mbc.org/church-growth/pastor-leadership-development-ministries
OR contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Dept. at
800-748-1651, Ext. 305, 601-292-3305, or E-mail at
cwtaylor@mbc.org

Mississippi Baptist State Senior Adult Choir Festival

May 5, 2015
First Baptist Church, Madison

2100 Main Street
Madison, MS 39110
601-856-6177

For more information contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 267, or 601-292-3267.

Morning Session

8:30 a.m. Registration
9:00 a.m. Festival Begins

Afternoon Session

12:45 p.m. Registration
1:15 p.m. Festival Begins

Mr. Noah
6/3/09
Parents: D & L
Restricted

Miss Margaret Wingo
6/3/04
Parents: Floyd & Sylvia
South America

Miss Sophia
6/14/03
Parents: D & K
European Peoples

Mr. Ethan Epps
6/15/05
Parents: Aaron & Tiffany
South American Peoples

Mr. Sam K
6/15/13
Parents: C & A
Restricted

Mr. Seth Davidson
6/17/95
Parents: P & D
European Peoples

Mr. Jack
6/19/03
Parents: J & S
Restricted

Miss Melody
6/24/95
Parents: Matt & Shea
Restricted

Miss Hannah Robertson
6/30/97
Parents: Steve & Ruth
Sub-Saharan African Peoples

Encourage an MK with a card!

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MBCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205. PLEASE NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.



MS POSITIONS

NEEDED: FULL TIME OR BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN AT ASHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH IN ASHLAND, MS. Send resumes to Mr. Stanley Poff, 285 Carter Flats, Ashland, MS 38603 or email to stanleypoff@yahoo.com

PART/TIME YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED AT NEW SIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS. Please send resumes to: Youth Minister Search Comm., 629 Forest Trail Brookhaven, Ms. 39001

STRONG RIVER BAPTIST CHURCH IN PINOLA, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Please send resumes to Gene Farmer at 209 Katie Bush Rd Pinola, MS 39149

MERIDIAN CHURCH SEEKS PIANIST. With both sight reading and accompaniment skills and will be responsible for playing with other musicians for weekly worship services and adult choir rehearsals. Salary will be based on experience. Email resume to ginnyruffin@at.net.

TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH. Send resumes to: 807 China Grove Road, Jayess, MS 39641 or brodale54@bellsouth.net.

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH IN MATHERSON, MS. IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR EITHER A BI-VOCATIONAL OR A FULL-TIME PASTOR.

Please send resumes to: Victory Baptist Church, ATTN: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 12, Matherston, Ms.

SMALL BAPTIST CHURCH IN NORTH RANKIN COUNTY IN NEED OF A BI-VOCATIONAL PIANO PLAYER, AND, ALSO, A BI-VOCATIONAL MUSIC DIRECTOR. Please send resumes to the Lake Harbor Baptist Church P O Box 339 Sandhill, Ms 39161.

SOUTH MCCOMB BAPTIST IS CURRENTLY SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER TO LEAD AND SERVE. Email all resumes to smbc01@bellsouth.net.

ROSELAND PARK BAPTIST CHURCH IN PICAYUNE, MS IS SEEKING A FULL TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resumes to RPBC, Attn: Music Search Committee, 2130 Highway 11 North, Picayune, MS 39466 or email to jennifer@rpbc.us

THAXTON BAPTIST CHURCH IN PONTOTOC COUNTY IS SEEKING GOD'S MAN FOR THE POSITION OF STUDENT PASTOR. Please email resumes to pastor@thaxtonbc.org

EAST BOONEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR. Please mail resumes to: East Booneville Baptist Church, Attn: Search Committee, 602 East Church St., Booneville, MS 38829, or email to: rickey@eastbooneville.com

HEUCKS RETREAT BAPTIST CHURCH, LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, IS IN SEARCH OF AN ASSISTANT PIANIST/KEYBOARDIST. Interested persons need contact the church office at 601-835-1821 for further information.

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Please email resumes to: fbg2311@comcast.net or mail to 2311 Glendale Avenue, Hattiesburg MS 39401. We are looking for someone for 15-20 hours per week.

NORTH WINONA BAPTIST CHURCH IN WINONA, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resume to 602 Alberta Drive, Winona, MS 38667, or email to nwbcadmin@at.net

AUBURN BAPTIST CHURCH IN TUPELO, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF CHILDREN'S MINISTER. Please email resumes to jharry@auburnbaptistchurch.org or mail to Auburn Baptist Church, 1136 Road 931, Tupelo, Ms 38804

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State Keyboard Festival held at Oakdale, Brandon

JACKSON, MS. (Special) — The State Keyboard Festival, sponsored by the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, was held Feb. 28 at Oakdale Church, Brandon.

The Summer Scholarship recipients included (top photo, left to right) Katelyn Lott, First Church, Florence; Anne Eliese Langley, Prentiss Church, Prentiss; Caleb Aultman, Pine Ridge Church, Sumrall; Deborah Ann Nevill, The Church at Lake Forest, Walls.

Adjudicators for the State Keyboard Festival included (bottom photo, left to right) Slater Murphy, Festival hymn leader and church music director at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; L. Darwin Brooks, assistant professor of music at Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain; Howard Keever, professor of music at William Carey University, Hattiesburg; Angela Willoughby, chair of the department of music at Mississippi College in Clinton; and Robert Knupp, professor of music at Mississippi College.

The State Keyboard Festival is supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program. For more information on the festival, contact Wyndy South in the Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3272 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 272. E-mail: wsouth@mbcb.org.



SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



ADJUDICATORS

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

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via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

SBC

cont. from p. 1

Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville.

Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church in New Orleans, replayed briefly for attendees his 2012 election as the first black president of a convention that was started in 1845 by a breakaway group of Baptists who supported the appointment of slave owners as missionaries.

Luter's election by acclamation was greeted by an emotional, standing ovation. "It was one of the greatest hours in the life of the Southern Baptist Convention," Luter told the audience. "My only concern is that hopefully it's not the last time."

ERLC President Russell Moore quickly seconded Luter's concern. "[T]hat's where the real test is. We've got the pictures of the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention [in the SBC building in Nashville]. Let's come back in 20 years, and if Fred Luter is an island in a sea of middle-aged white guys, that means we have not been where we need to be.

"We can't say, 'Because this happened, now we've settled this issue.' This is an ongoing issue of leadership in our convention."

Luter's election as SBC president came 17 years after SBC messengers approved a resolution repenting of the convention's pro-slavery and racist past upon its 150th anniversary.

Frank S. Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, told attendees he does not want Luter to be an "anomaly."

"He was a great, great president," Page said of Luter, "and I want to see that day come when it's not atypical, it's normal to see a person of color as president."

The candidates are available, Luter and Page said. "There's a lot of qualified African-American pastors in this convention," Luter told the audience of 550 registrants, "and even those on

"I believe that God is calling this convention to lead this nation in revival, and if we get [reconciliation] straight — when we get this straight — we'll see revival break out all over."

K. Marshall Williams
president of the SBC's
National African
American Fellowship

whose shoulders I have stood before I became president of the Southern Baptist Convention who put their blood, sweat, and tears into this convention, and for whatever reason God allowed it to happen to me."

Southern Baptists "have a number of great" African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, and other ethnic leaders, Page said. Racial representation, however, has "got to be at every other level of SBC life," he said.

That does not mean the convention should add a quota system, Page pointed out. "We don't want that, but we want there to be such an openness that it becomes just what happens. Great, great leaders rise to the top."

"I want to see the day when our boards and agencies and our employment at all our agencies look like our convention and look like our nation," he said. "We have a long way to go."

Racial reconciliation in the SBC could have a much wider impact, said K. Marshall Williams, senior pastor of Nazarene (Baptist) Church in Philadelphia, Pa., and president of the SBC's National African American Fellowship.

"I believe that God is calling this convention to lead this nation in revival, and if we get [reconciliation] straight — when we get this straight — we'll see re-

vival break out all over," he said.

Williams expressed encouragement about the building of relationships across racial lines and the advancement of African Americans into senior management positions at SBC entities.

"We're beginning to build relationships where we can know our brother's heart and be able to take the next step and... speak the truth in love and talk about the tough things based on what the Scripture says and challenge one another to be in accord with the Word of God so that we might be used by God," Williams said.

Southern Baptists already are "the most ethnically diverse denominational convention in this continent, with nobody even coming close," Page said.

One in five Southern Baptist congregations is predominantly African American or otherwise ethnic in its makeup, Page said. That includes about 3,000 black churches, more than 2,000 Hispanic churches, and more than 2,000 Asian churches, Page said.

LIFEWAY

cont. from p. 1

describe the afterlife experience" to "become their source and basis for an understanding of the afterlife."

The resolution did not list specific book or movie titles, but it seemed to describe works like 90 Minutes in Heaven, The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven by Kevin and Alex Malarkey, and Heaven Is for Real by Todd Burpo, along with its companion movie released last year by Sony Pictures.

The resolution affirmed "the sufficiency of biblical revelation over subjective experiential explanations to guide one's understanding of the truth about heaven and hell."

In January, LifeWay announced it would stop selling The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven after Alex Malarkey admitted that he lied about having a vision of heaven

as a six-year-old. At the time, King said LifeWay was "committed to becoming even more proactive in the next few months in evaluating the resources we carry."

Giving Films announced the completion of filming for 90 Minutes in Heaven on March 12. The movie stars Hayden Christensen, who portrayed a young Luke Skywalker in the Star Wars movie series, and Kate Bosworth, who portrayed Lois Lane in 2006's Superman Returns.

The film also features veteran actor and former U.S. Senator Fred Thompson, as well as Christian vocalist Michael W. Smith and country music star Dwight Yoakam, according to a news release from Giving Films.

"I'm an ordinary man with an extraordinary story," Piper said according to the news release. "I want people to see hope in their challenges, to see that pain can come with purpose."

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2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

The Promise Fulfilled • Luke 24:19-35

Have you ever wanted something to be true so bad you could hardly stand it, yet, as far as you knew, there was no way it could be true? Just imagine how these two followers of Jesus felt as they walked from Jerusalem down to Emmaus talking about the events of the past few days. Jesus had been crucified and buried. They were so in hope that He would be their deliverer from the bondage of the Roman empire. They were looking for Him to be the promised Messiah!

Little did they know they were about to have an encounter that would change their lives forever. Now they would have a real story to tell. They had been walking in indecision.

The Questions Raised (Luke 24:13-24)

"What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" (Luke 24:16 NKJV)

These two men had been talking about the events, when yet unrecognized by them, Jesus would enter their conversation asking questions about their conversation. They were indeed puzzled that anyone in the region would not know that their leader, Jesus, had been crucified and put in a tomb. Now rumors were being spread that He had been resurrected. They questioned their guest traveler of his knowledge of these events. They told Jesus of these events and these rumors.

Little did they know what was about to take place, true revelation.

The Old Testament Revealed (Luke 24:25-27)

"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" (Luke 24:25 NKJV)

Jesus would quickly question their doubt and their understanding of prophecy concerning the Messiah and His resurrection. "And beginning at Moses and



Explore the Bible

with Kiely D. Young

the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:25)

Jesus

used scripture to explain the current truth telling them they should have remembered the things they had been taught chastising them while reaffirming the Word of truth.

It is critical that all believers understand the Word they say they believe. What we BELIEVE determines the things we VALUE, and our VALUES determine our ACTIONS. When we doubt what we know to be true, we walk in doubt. But when we understand what

we know and believe, we walk in faith. These followers of Christ were about to have that revelation moment.

The Messiah Revealed (Luke 24:28-32)

"Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight." (Luke 24:31 NKJV)

Jesus continued on the road with them and they encouraged Him to stay and fellowship with them over a meal. Jesus agreed.

As they, in Jewish tradition, lay around the table, Jesus took the bread, blessed it and gave it to the men. It was at

that moment they realized they had been in the presence of Jesus the Messiah, and, just as quickly as they understood who He was, He vanished from their sight. They related Jesus had touched their hearts and opened their eyes to the truth of His resurrection. What a moment of revelation!

What does it take to move you from doubt to faith in your moment of unbelief?

We are given the choice of doubt or faith. We often base our decision on

rumors rather than truth, resulting in doubt. The word of God is the same today as it was when it was written. It is God's Truth to us for faith.

The Resurrection Proclaimed (Luke 24:33-35)

Those followers of Christ immediately returned to Jerusalem and said to the disciples,

"The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." (Luke 24:33 NKJV)

These men excitedly told of their experience with Christ along the road to Emmaus, and how He had been revealed to them with the breaking of bread together. Their excitement was just too much to hold back. They had to tell others.

Should we not share the same excitement as these two men? They had to tell the others what they had just experienced. They shared their encounter with Christ that changed their life.

We need to do the same thing. Simply tell what our life was before Christ, how we came to Christ and what Christ is doing in our life today. There is no better testimony, and it is unique to your life. It is worth telling. Share it with someone today.

Young is retired Sunday School Director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and a member of Ridgecrest Church, Madison.

Ascended Like No Other • Acts 1:3-11

Jesus is like no other. According to the divine plan of God, He was prophetically promised and miraculously born. While on Earth, He displayed power that left onlookers amazed and challengers defeated. As the personification of wisdom, Jesus taught with authority. Our sinless Savior died vicariously and was raised victoriously. We should not be one bit surprised to witness that His return to His Father was equally unparalleled. The events of The Ascension are recorded in Acts chapter one.

After His baptism, the earthly ministry of Jesus began with forty days of prayer and fasting and temptation in the wilderness of Judea. He emerged from that experience untarnished, victorious over every snare set for Him by the devil. After His resurrection, the earthly ministry of Jesus ended with forty days of walking in fellowship with His followers in celebration of His victory over every slight glimpse of the shadow of death.

With the death of Jesus on the cross, Passover had been completely fulfilled, both literally and scripturally. Jesus, The Perfect Lamb of God, had been sacrificed on Calvary. Reminiscent of the first ever Passover in Egypt, His blood had been shed and applied to the "doorpost" of the center cross. No other sacrifice for sin would EVER be required. The

Old Testament picture had become the Gospel reality.

The feast called Pentecost is observed fifty days after Passover. For forty of those days, Jesus spent time with His followers proving His resurrection and reminding them of the task of sharing life with those who did not yet believe. With ten days remaining until Pentecost, Jesus gathered His eleven disciples together on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem. This had been the place of the betrayal and arrest

of Jesus the night before the crucifixion. This day, His desire was to capture their attention and focus them on

His eternal plan for mankind. For three years, they had walked with Him and WATCHED Him WORK. Now, for the next ten days, they were to WAIT and PRAY for the coming Promise. Soon they would be able to WORK and WITNESS of Him to others.

The eleven disciples were soon to receive fulfillment of the promise Je-

sus had made to them during the Last Supper. He would not leave them as orphans. His plan was to send the Holy Spirit to abide with each of them, giving them the power to live and move and share Him with others. God sent Jesus to provide salvation for the world. Jesus was now departing that world, His earthly mission complete. Now it was time for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to help His followers complete their mission.

It has always been very difficult for me to understand why the followers of Jesus continued to ask questions that seemed to be way off base. After all, they

had lived with Him and walked with Him and certainly had an "inside track" on His plan. They were like Nicodemus in John 3, always asking "how come" physical questions when Jesus was providing "let's go serve" spiritual answers.

Jesus' final words this day would outline their mission which started locally, spread nationally, expanded globally for

the sake of eternity. They were to begin their ministry from Jerusalem, expand it to Samaria and finally to the uttermost parts of the world. They were to move from the familiar to the unthinkable to the perceived-to-be unreachable. From the guttermost to the uttermost, their goal was to do everything on behalf of others most.

Jesus, Maker of Clouds and Sky, was received into a cloud while His astounded followers gazed heavenward. God sent two angels to draw them back to the reality of the situation and to make a promise to them (and to us) of His future return.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was certainly there for the delivery of Jesus in Bethlehem. The gospel writers also tell us that she was standing with John at the foot of the cross. The first chapter of Acts shows us that she was also present for His Return to Sender Day in Jerusalem. How comforting to know that Mary was also a member of the Upper Room Prayer Team which launched the very first church planted in Jerusalem.

By sending the Holy Spirit as He had promised, Jesus left the early church in the best hands of all: His very own nail-scared hands.

Brown is staff evangelist, First Church, Richland.



Bible Studies for Life

with Becky Brown

Revivals & Homecomings

► Enon Church, Grenada: a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., Revival, Apr. 12 - 15; Sun., 11 6:30 p.m.; Jerry King, pastor;

Brandon Lofton, music.

► Society Hill, Oakvale: Revival, Apr. 12 - 15; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Matt Pittman, speaker; Wesley Lee, music; Jake Stat-

en, pastor.

► Macedonia Church, Men- denhall: Revival, Apr. 12 - 17; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Mon. - Fri., 7 p.m.; Roger Lee, speaker; Jason Sullivan, music;

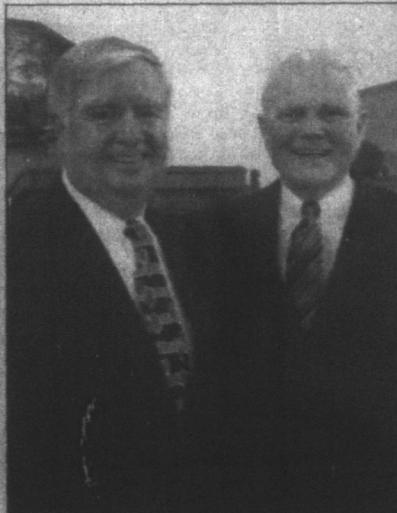
David B. Jager, pastor.

► Jericho Church, Guntown: Revival, Apr. 12 - 15; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, speaker; Marvin Robbins, pastor.

Just for the Record



HARPERVILLE CHURCH, HARPERVILLE, ordained Jason Tillman to the ministry Mar. 29. Tillman also begins his service as minister of youth at the church. Shown are pastor Bobby McKay (left), Tillman (center), and Joni Tillman.



HERMANVILLE CHURCH, HERMANVILLE, ordained Doug Salley to the ministry Nov. 23, 2014. Shown are Salle (left) and Jim Futral.



The choir, orchestra, and drama team of **SLAYDEN CHURCH, MARSHALL ASSOCIATION**, presented their Easter program, Cornerstone, Mar. 28 and 29. Brandon Hughes, minister of music; Rusty Fair, pastor.

In other Church News:

► **Pulaski Church, Pulaski**, is honoring pastor Mickey Walls upon 25 years of service Apr. 12, 10 a.m. – noon, followed by a potluck lunch. Homewood Quartet, music; Tim Fungay, speaker.



The GA's of **ARLINGTON CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, participated in a fundraiser and walk in March. Shown are the participants. GA leaders are Lorrie Lofton and Leigh Reed; Matthew Green, pastor.



FORT BAYOU CHURCH, VANCLEVE, held a wild game dinner Feb. 28, followed by a note burning service observing the payoff on the church building. Shown are Phillip Price and congregation.



The children of **FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA**, participate in G-Force (children's worship) each Sunday morning. Shown are the participants.



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